

March 3, 2003

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen  
Chief Administrative Officer

**MOTION TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT BUSH'S TREATMENT VOUCHER INITIATIVE  
(ITEM NO. 3, AGENDA OF MARCH 4, 2003)**

Item No. 3 on the March 4, 2003 Agenda is a motion by Supervisor Antonovich that the Board send a five signature letter to President Bush supporting his Treatment Voucher Initiative and expressing the County's willingness to assist in developing and implementing the initiative.

The Administration has requested a 9 percent increase in the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004 budget for substance abuse activities. The additional \$194 million requested would bring the total federal commitment to \$2.5 billion. The Administration's goal is to reduce current use of illicit drugs by 10 percent in two years and 25 percent in five years.

As part of that goal, the Administration is proposing a new three-year \$200 million per year voucher program for persons needing alcohol or drug treatment. The initiative is subject to enactment of legislation and appropriations. Over one million individuals receive treatment for drug use each year, and it is estimated that as many as 100,000 of those seeking treatment are unable to access the appropriate services. The Administration's budget documents state that the program will increase substance abuse treatment capacity, consumer choice and access to a comprehensive continuum of treatment options, including faith and community based organizations. It estimates that approximately 100,000 people annually would receive services through this effort. Attached is the Administration's fact sheet on the proposal.

While the program and financial specifics of the plan have not been drafted, the Administration intends that awards would be through competitive grants and would

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provide States with maximum flexibility in customizing a voucher program to fit a State's unique needs. Funding for the initiative appears to be separate from, and in addition to, the current state substance abuse grants administered by the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

There is no Board policy related to this issue. **Therefore, a County position on the Treatment Voucher Initiative is a matter for Board determination.**

DEJ:GK  
MAL:JF:DRS:ib

Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Legislative Strategist